

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (original): A leather-like sheet fabricated by infiltrating an aqueous resin dispersion (A) into a fibrous substrate, which satisfies the following requirements (I) to (IV):

(I) the aqueous resin dispersion (A) comprises essentially a main resin (a) stabilized with a surfactant, a polymer (b) having a polyoxyethylene group in its side chains, and a surfactant (c);

(II) the main resin (a) comprises an urethane resin (a1) and/or an urethane-acrylic composite resin(a2), and the resin skeleton contains from 1 to 10 mmols of a carboxyl group per 100 g of the resin;

(III) the polymer (b) is obtained through polymerization of a polyoxyethylene group-having ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b1) and any other ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b2) in a ratio by mass (b1)/(b2) = 60/40 to 100/0;

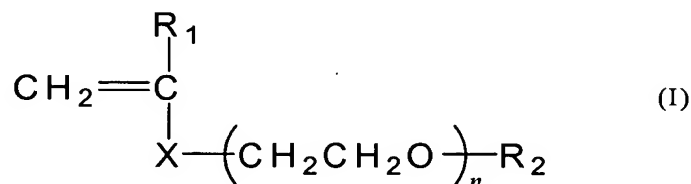
(IV) the percentage, % by mass (α) of the polyoxyethylene group in the polymer (b) and the number of mols (β) of the amino group per gram of the polymer (b) satisfy the following formula (1):

$$35 \leq \alpha + \beta \times 20000 \leq 60 \quad (1).$$

Claim 2 (currently amended): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the aqueous resin dispersion (A) further ~~contains~~ comprises an inorganic metal salt (d).

Claim 3 (original): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the main resin (a) is an urethane-acrylic composite resin (a2) in which the ratio by mass of the urethane resin component to the acrylic polymer component falls between 10/90 and 70/30.

Claim 4 (original): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the polyoxyethylene group-having ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b1) is a compound having a structure of the following general formula (I):



wherein R₁ represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R₂ is a group selected from an alkyl group, an aryl group or an alkylaryl group having from 1 to 18 carbon atoms; X represents a group selected from -C(=O)O-, -OC(=O)-, -O-, -NHC(=O)-, -C(=O)NH-; and n indicates an integer of 2 or more.

Claim 5 (original): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number, n, of the repetitions of the oxyethylene unit in the polyoxyethylene group-having ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b1) falls between 2 and 10.

Claim 6 (original): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the aqueous 10 % solution of the polymer (b) has a clouding point that falls between 10 and 60°C.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surfactant (c) ~~is composed of~~ comprises from 30 to 100 % by mass of a nonionic surfactant (c1) having an HLB value of from 12 to 18, and from 0 to 70 % by mass of any other surfactant (c2).

Claim 8 (currently amended): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the aqueous resin dispersion (A) ~~contains~~ comprises from 25 to 60 % by mass of a main resin (a), from 0.5 to 10 % by mass of a polymer (b), from 0.5 to 5 % by mass of a surfactant (c) and from 0 to 2 % by mass of an inorganic metal salt (d).

Claim 9 (original): The leather-like sheet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gelling time of the aqueous resin dispersion (A) kept in a closed condition at 70°C is within 10 minutes, and the viscosity increase in the resin dispersion (A) kept in a closed condition at 40°C for 2 weeks is at most 50 %.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The leather-like sheet as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 9, wherein the fibers that constitute the fibrous substrate are ultrafine fibers.

Claim 11 (original): An aqueous resin dispersion (A) to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates, which satisfies the following requirements (I) to (IV):

(I) the aqueous resin dispersion (A) comprises essentially a main resin(a) stabilized with a surfactant, a polymer (b) having a polyoxyethylene group in its side chains, and a surfactant (c);

(II) the main resin (a) comprises an urethane resin (a1) and/or an urethane-acrylic composite resin (a2), and the resin skeleton contains from 1 to 10 mmols of a carboxyl group per 100 g of the resin;

(III) the polymer (b) is obtained through polymerization of a polyoxyethylene group-having ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b1) and any other ethylenic unsaturated monomer(b2) in a ratio by mass (b1)/(b2) = 60/40 to 100/0;

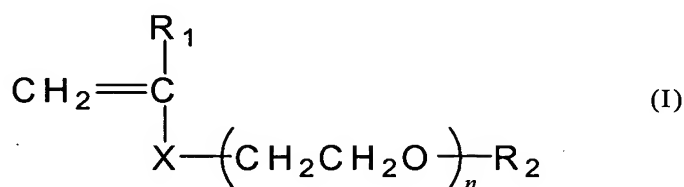
(IV) the percentage, % by mass (α) of the polyoxyethylene group in the polymer (b) and the number of mols (β) of the amino group per gram of the polymer (b) satisfy the following formula (1):

$$35 \leq \alpha + \beta \times 20000 \leq 60 \quad (1).$$

Claim 12 (currently amended): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, which further ~~contains~~ comprises an inorganic metal salt (d).

Claim 13 (original): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, wherein the main resin (a) is an urethane-acrylic composite resin (a2) in which the ratio by mass of the urethane resin component to the acrylic polymer component falls between 10/90 and 70/30.

Claim 14 (original): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, wherein the polyoxyethylene unit-having ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b1) is a compound having a structure of the following general formula (I):



wherein R_1 represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R_2 is a group selected from an alkyl group, an aryl group or an alkylaryl group having from 1 to 18 carbon atoms; X

represents a group selected from -C(=O)O-, -OC(=O)-, -O-, -NHC(=O)-, -C(=O)NH-; and n indicates an integer of 2 or more.

Claim 15 (original): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, wherein the number, n, of the repetitions of the oxyethylene unit in the polyoxyethylene group-having ethylenic unsaturated monomer (b1) falls between 2 and 10.

Claim 16 (original): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, wherein the aqueous 10 % solution of the polymer (b) has a clouding point that falls between 10 and 60°C.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, wherein the surfactant (c) ~~is composed of~~ comprises from 30 to 100 % by mass of a nonionic surfactant (c1) having an HLB value of from 12 to 18, and from 0 to 70 % by mass of any other surfactant (c2).

Claim 18 (currently amended): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, which ~~contains~~ comprises from 25 to 60 % by mass of a main resin (a), from 0.5 to 10 % by mass of a polymer (b), from 0.5 to 5 % by mass of a surfactant (c) and from 0 to 2 % by mass of an inorganic metal salt (d).

Claim 19 (original): The aqueous resin dispersion to be infiltrated into fibrous substrates as claimed in claim 11, of which the gelling time kept in a closed condition at

70°C is within 10 minutes, and the viscosity increase kept in a closed condition at 40°C for 2 weeks is at most 50 %.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A method for fabricating leather-like sheets, which comprises infiltrating an aqueous resin dispersion (A) of ~~any one of claims~~ claim 11 to 19 into a fibrous substrate.

Claim 21 (original): The method for fabricating leather-like sheets as claimed in claim 20, wherein the fibers that constitute the fibrous substrate are ultrafine fibers-forming fibers and the fibers are converted into ultrafine fibers before or after an aqueous resin dispersion (A) has been applied to the substrate.